

# CREATED IN THE IMAGE AND LIKENESS OF GOD

## RESPECT

### GRADES K–8

There are three main topics to reflect on and discuss. (1) We must respect God the Creator. (2) We must respect each person, created in the image and likeness of God the Creator. (3) We must respect each person for the gift they are to society and respect the needs they ask of society and to recognize and nurture that gift.

## 1. Respect God

### READ MALACHI 1:6

“A son honors his father, and a servant fears his master; if then I am a father, where is the honor due to me? And if I am a master, where is the reverence due to me? So says the Lord of hosts to you, O priests, who despise his name.”

God demands the respect that a child should give his father and that a servant would give his master. It is essential that respect be given to the Father and Master of all. Man is created in the image and likeness of God. If man does not respect God, he cannot respect man, who is created in God’s image. Jesus expresses this truth in the parable of the tenants found in the 12th chapter of Mark’s Gospel.

### READ MARK 12:1–12

In the parable of the tenants, a vineyard owner who had left for a trip leased his vineyard to tenant farmers. The owner sent more than four servants, one at a time, to collect the produce of the vineyard from the tenants. The tenants beat some of the servants who were sent and killed others, showing no respect for the servers or the owner who had sent them in his place. Finally the owner decided to send his beloved son, thinking, “They will respect my son.” The tenants showed disrespect also to the beloved son. By showing disrespect to the son, they affirmed their disrespect of the owner.

## 2. Respect Each Person, Created in the Image and Likeness of God

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC) in section 1700 states that “the dignity of the human person is rooted in his creation in the image and likeness of God.” Blessed Raphaela Mary, who lived from 1850 to 1925, said, “We ought to respect the image of God in everyone. It is there.”

This dignity of the human person is given to every man without exception. By the very fact that they were created, they are in God’s image and have been redeemed by Christ, are united to Christ, and have been given a purpose in life. In section 14.3 of his encyclical *Redemptor Hominis*, Pope John Paul II said, “Man—every man without any exception whatever—has been redeemed by Christ, with man—with each man without any exception whatever—Christ is in a way united, even when man is unaware of it; Christ, who died, and was raised up for all, provides man—each man and every man—with the light and the strength to measure up to His supreme calling.”

Each person then is called to measure up to His supreme calling, His supreme vocation. God gives him the light and strength to measure up to His supreme calling. If we are to respect each person, we must also respect and nurture the calling given to each person by God.

### 3. Respect Each Person for What They Can Give to Society and Respect the Needs They Ask of Society

READ JOHN 4:1–42

In the story of the woman at the well, we see a perfect example of how differences due to culture, gender, race, or religion can bring unity. Jesus (a Jew) and the woman (a Samaritan) were from cultures that had nothing in common with one another. Jesus asked the woman for a drink of water. The woman responded with hostility and disrespect, “How can you, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?” The woman puts up a wall of disrespect based on the differences of gender and culture. Jesus continues to tell her, “If you knew the *gift of God* and who is saying to you give me a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.” *Jesus shows us that to tear down the wall of differences we must one, see each person as a gift from God and two, realize that as a gift from God they have value and worth.* The next word out of the woman’s mouth is “Sir.” This title in any culture and throughout time is a sign of respect. Because the woman no longer sees Jesus as different but as a *gift from God* and with value, she begins to respect Him and addresses Him as “sir” two times. Christ continues to reveal who He is to her and share with her things about her life. She next addresses Jesus as a prophet, a title of great respect, and later the woman believes that He could be the chosen one of God, the Messiah, and she shares this belief with the whole town. Jesus shows us that respect and unity even between the greatest of enemies is possible if we allow ourselves to invest the time in discovering each person as a gift from God with worth and value to us and to society.

READ MATTHEW 5:43–45

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your heavenly Father, for he makes His sun rise on the bad and the good, and causes rain to fall on the just and the unjust.”

We typically label those who we feel have no value to us or society as our enemy or the enemy of society. Each person is a gift from God and should be respected for what they can contribute to society. Each person is a gift from God, but no person is every gift. We depend on each person to share their gift if society is going to function. This dependence on each other which all humans share is expressed in Christ’s words to St. Catherine of Siena, “I distribute the virtues quite diversely; I do not give all of them to each person, but some to one, some to others . . . I shall give principally charity to one; justice to another; humility to this one, a living faith to that one . . . and so I have given many gifts and graces, both spiritual and temporal, with such diversity that I have not given everything to one single person, so that you may be constrained to practice charity towards one another . . . I have willed that one should need another and that all should be my ministers in distributing the graces and gifts they have received from me.”

We therefore must freely give the gift of ourselves to others and work to provide the means necessary for others to recognize and nurture the gift of themselves, which they will give. Section 1931 of the Catechism states, “Respect for the human person proceeds by way of respect for the principle that everyone should look upon his neighbor (without any exception) as ‘another self,’ above all bearing in mind his life and the means necessary for living it with dignity.” As Catholics we must care for each person and give him or her the respect and dignity they are due. If we selectively choose who we will love and respect, St. John Vianney, who lived from 1786 to 1859, said, “All our religion is but a false religion, and all our virtues are mere illusions and we ourselves are only hypocrites in the sight of God, if we have not that universal charity for everyone—for the good, and for the bad, for the poor and the rich, and for all those who do us harm as much as for those who do us good.”

# REFLECTIONS AND QUESTIONS

## R E S P E C T

### GRADES K-2

The way people speak to us shows what they think of us. We like them to use our right names and to use them in a polite way. The more important a person is, the more careful we are to be respectful to that person. And we would never allow anyone to speak rudely to our father or mother. God is our loving Father, but He is also the all-powerful, all-holy God, creator of heaven and earth. I, His creature, show my love and reverence by the way I speak to Him and about Him, and about what belongs to Him.

What are some ways I can show reverence by the way I speak about God?

What holy persons must I respect? (Pope, bishops, priests, deacons, etc.)

What holy places? (Churches, shrines)

What holy things? (Crucifixes, rosaries, etc.)

God is our loving Father. He made me and everything in the world. We are all different, and He loves each one of His children. God wants everybody in the whole world to know and love Him. In His great love, He calls us all to be His children and to live forever with Him in heaven. God thought of the first man. He loved him. He wanted to share His happiness with him, and so He made him.

Why did God make you?

Why did He make everyone?

Where is our real home?

Jesus said that “the greatest love a man can show” is to give “his life for his friends.” Jesus did this for us.

What does God call us to do for others?

# REFLECTIONS AND QUESTIONS

## RESPECT

### GRADES THREE AND FOUR

Who is God to you?

Name some ways you can show respect to God the Father.

We are created in the image and likeness of God; what are some of your talents that God has given you?

Look at your neighbor; what are some of the gifts that God has given him/her?

Now with all your gifts and talents, what are some things you can do to nurture your gifts/talents in today's society?

We are called to respect our neighbors no matter what age, race, or religion. We should not discriminate against anyone.

What kind of act have you performed recently for your neighbor?

Name other ways you might consider doing acts of kindness in your life.

# REFLECTIONS AND QUESTIONS

## R E S P E C T

### GRADES FIVE AND SIX

What are some ways that you can show respect to God?

How do you show respect to people who are different from you (race, culture, religion)?

Explain about a time in history (e.g., persecution in the early church, slavery, civil rights, the Holocaust of World War II) when groups of people were not viewed as “gifts.” How was the situation resolved?

# REFLECTIONS AND QUESTIONS

## RESPECT

### GRADES SEVEN AND EIGHT

Make a list of as many qualities/attributes of God that you can think of.

In what ways do you see those qualities/attributes in others (parents, friends, etc.)? How do you see in these people the image of God?

How do you see the image of God in yourself?

We learn in the story of the woman at the well that we show respect by learning about others and by seeing them as a gift from God.

List someone or people you do not respect. How can you get to know about them better? In what ways are they a gift from God?

Read the quote from St. John Vianney. Why is it hard for us to show love toward the good but not toward the bad, toward the rich but not the poor, toward those who do good for us but not those who do us harm?

What things can we do to learn to respect and love our enemies?